

# DOINGWHATWORKS



## SLIDESHOW

Full Details and Transcript



## Strategies for Scheduling Literacy Instruction

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School,  
Arkansas

February 2011

**Topic** INCREASED LEARNING TIME

**Practice** STRUCTURE TIME

### Highlights

- » Middle school English teacher Heather Saunders differentiates instructional strategies and allocation of instructional time by students' ability level.
- » While medium- and high-achieving students work in pairs in the classroom, Ms. Saunders provides more individualized attention to low-achieving students.
- » Additional literacy instruction and enrichment to low-, moderate-, and high-achieving students is provided during physical education time, after-school, and during Saturday school, based on students' needs.

**About the Site** KIPP Delta College Preparatory School  
Helena, AR

### Demographics:

- » 99% Black
- » 1% White
- » 90% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
- » 3% Special Education

(National Office for Research on Measurement and Evaluation Systems, Arkansas School Performance Report, 2009)

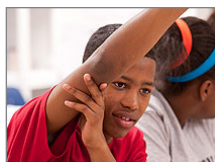
KIPP Delta College Preparatory School aims to close the achievement gap, get all students on track for graduation, and develop their college-going aspirations. The school attributes its academic success to:

- » A longer school day, Saturday school, and a mandatory three-week summer school
- » Needs-based academic remediation and a choice of extracurricular enrichment during after-school hours
- » Instruction and academic support tailored to students' mastery level
- » Continual assessment to determine students' need for academic supports

## Full Transcript

## Presentation Title: Scheduling Strategies for Reading Instruction


KIPP Delta College Preparatory School, Helena, AR




Heather Saunders, English language arts teacher and eighth-grade chair, has developed several scheduling strategies to ensure that the literacy needs of all students are met. Her scheduling strategies combine group instruction and tutoring, and use after-school time to supplement classroom instruction.




## Slide 1: Organizing the school day


 **Text:** Heather Saunders analyzed student data and saw that the majority of the students were below grade level in reading. She established Reading Enrichment block every morning. During that time, students receive additional reading support tailored to their ability level. For example, some of the students attend a class that focuses on decoding skills and improving reading fluency.

 **Audio:** We realized that reading needed to be a huge focus at the school. Like, if that's what we're going to preach about and say that reading's important, then we need to make that be a bigger part of the day. And so I came up with the idea of Reading Enrichment, which is a block of time in the beginning of the day that every student is learning at their own level. And then with that, with the ELA [English language arts] class, we realized that they are getting a lot of ELA time, and they wanted to balance that out with math. And when I say "they," I mean Mr. Tisby and Mr. Chari. So they wanted to balance that out with math. And so what they did was they changed the schedule slightly again, and they allowed a little bit more math time in the schedule to balance out the reading enrichment class and then the ELA class.




## Slide 2: Tailored instruction

 **Text:** Every month students may move into a more advanced or a less advanced literacy enrichment group based on how well they did during the previous month. That way, the school was able to quickly move forward students who entered the school with little or no reading skills.


 **Audio:** Every group has every level in it, in terms of grade levels. Fifth graders can definitely be in the room with an eighth grader. A seventh grader can be in the room with an eighth grader. It just really depends on what they're missing. And so they're all basically getting the same instruction, no matter what grade level they're in. It just depends on what they're missing. So if it's in advanced vowels, they all are in the group that needs to work with advanced vowels. If it's fluency, and they can decode really well, but their fluency is off, they are in a room that is focusing on fluency. If it's multisyllable words that they don't know how to break down, they're in a room with other students that have that similar problem.

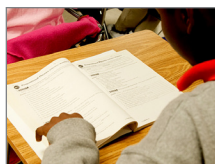


## Slide 3: Advanced readers


 **Text:** Based on benchmarking data, about one-fourth of the eighth-grade students were classified as "highly proficient" (closer to


the upper limit of proficiency score) or advanced. These students were encouraged to take on greater challenges and engage in independent projects with constant teacher feedback.

 **Audio:** My classroom and tutoring time are very connected. What I do in the classroom is what determines my extra tutoring time for students. So first what I do in order to determine who is going to be tutored outside the classroom, I look at the benchmark exam and I determine a high, medium, and low group. My high students are those that excelled on the benchmarking tests. They did advanced or proficient or high proficient. My medium students are considered the students who are low proficient and high basic. And my low students are my students who perform low basic and below basic. What I did with those groups was I determined, basically, a structure for my classroom. I have my high and my medium students doing a lot of paired work together, where they can help each other in terms of reading comprehension and working on different skills in the classroom.



#### Slide 4: Medium readers


 **Text:** About one-fourth of the students were classified as performing close to the lower limit of the proficient level, or close to the upper limit of the basic level. To help them become proficient and to maintain proficiency, they received tutoring while their peers were in physical education classes. Tutoring focused on reading comprehension strategies and test-taking skills.


 **Audio:** Based off of the benchmark exam, I identify students as being high, medium, and low in my classroom. I'm able to work with my low students in the classroom because I use my high students to help the medium students during peer tutoring. Because I don't get to spend as much time with my medium students in the classroom, because I'm spending a lot of time with my low, I use my P.E. period every day to work with those medium students. They're identified as the low proficient and high basic. Those students, I meet with them every day and we work on different testing strategies, but different

comprehension strategies as well. They work on multiple-choice questions, and they have to find evidence to support their multiple-choice answers. They work on open responses. And I do track all that information to make sure that they are mastering.




### Slide 5: Struggling readers


 **Text:** About half of the eighth-grade students required the most intensive assistance. They received several instructional supports. First, they received more individualized teacher attention during reading classes, while other students engaged in peer tutoring (students helping each other read). Second, during the expanded part of the school day, they attended remediation classes. Finally, Saturday school provided additional reteaching of literacy skills.

 **Audio:** I work very closely with my low students because I want to make sure that in the classroom every day they're getting what they're supposed to get. I also pull them out, either during the day at some point or after school a couple times a week to work with them more closely. A lot of them need that extra, even though I'm working with them in the classroom.




### Slide 6: Tracking student progress


 **Text:** The school regularly analyzes students' progress and adjusts students' schedules based on their level. The school has hired a consultant that comes in every year to provide guidance in instruction, assessment, and use of data tools to identify student needs.

 **Audio:** All kids are tested on the survey, and then all the data is entered into this Excel tracker. So that's our data tool. And so I see what kids, where they fall within that data. And then I group them so that they continue to be with students that are achieving the same level.



## Slide 7: Conclusion

 **Text:** According to Heather Saunders, many eighth graders have expressed gratitude and appreciation for receiving the extra support. They shared that reading difficulties had bothered them, but in the past no one was available to help them with basic reading skills. Thanks to the efforts of students and school staff, data show that by the end of eighth grade, the majority (89%) of students became proficient or advanced in literacy, compared to 50% of the students in their district.

 **Audio:** So these all lend to how we increase our learning time at the school. We do a lot of after-school. We take kids out of extracurriculars to make sure that they're going to get a lesson. In their core class, we do a lot of remediation or enrichment in Saturday school. And then summer school is pretty much, we either remediate or we try to push them on skills that they're going to learn the next year.